WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of determining cardiovascular risk in a person not predetermined to be subject to cardiovascular disease, the method comprising the step of:

determining the MIF concentration in the blood, saliva or urine of the person as a marker of cardiovascular risk for the person.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of assigning to the person a cardiovascular risk metric in accordance with the MIF concentration.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of prescribing for the person a cardiovascular treatment modality in accordance with the MIF concentration.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising making an additional assessment of cardiovascular risk of the person, the additional assessment selected from the group consisting of a stress test, a CRP assay and an LDL assay.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the detecting step is repeated over time intervals to monitor change in cardiovascular risk for the person over time.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the detecting step is repeated over treatment to monitor change in cardiovascular risk for the person over treatment.

7. A method for characterizing a risk of developing a future cardiovascular disorder in an apparently healthy individual, the method comprising steps:

obtaining a MIF level in the blood, saliva or urine of the individual,

comparing the MIF level to a predetermined value, and

characterizing the individual's risk of developing the future cardiovascular disorder based upon the MIF level in comparison to the predetermined value.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the predetermined value is a plurality of predetermined MIF level ranges and the comparing step comprises determining in which of the predetermined MIF level ranges the individual's level falls.

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9. The method of claim 7, wherein the individual is apparently healthy but statistically overweight or obese.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein the cardiovascular disorder is selected from the group consisting of stroke and myocardial infarction.

11. The method of claim 7, wherein the MIF level is compared to a first predetermined value to establish a first risk value, and the method further comprises the steps of:

obtaining a cholesterol level in the individual,

comparing the cholesterol level to a second predetermined value to establish a second risk value, and

characterizing the individual's risk of developing the cardiovascular disorder based upon the combination of the first risk value and the second risk value, wherein the combination of the first risk value and second risk value establishes a third risk value different from said first and second risk values.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the first predetermined value is a first plurality of predetermined MIF concentration ranges and the comparing step comprises determining in which of the predetermined MIF concentration ranges the individual's level falls.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the individual is apparently healthy but statistically overweight or obese.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein the cardiovascular disorder is selected from the group consisting of stroke and myocardial infarction.

15. A method for evaluating the likelihood that an individual will benefit from treatment with an agent for reducing the risk of a cardiovascular disorder, the method comprising steps:

obtaining a MIF level in the blood, saliva or urine of the individual, and

comparing the MIF level to a predetermined value,

wherein the MIF level in comparison to the predetermined value is indicative of whether the individual will benefit from treatment with said agent.

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16. The method of claim 15, wherein the predetermined value is a plurality of predetermined MIF concentration ranges and the comparing step comprises determining in which of the predetermined MIF concentration ranges the individual's level falls.

5   17. The method of claim 15, wherein the individual is apparently healthy but statistically overweight or obese.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the cardiovascular disorder is selected from the group consisting of stroke and myocardial infarction.

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19. The method of claim 15, wherein the agent is aspirin.

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